

First arrest of unregistered dentist suspected of carrying out tooth bleaching or whitening procedure

The Department of Health (DH) said today (January 14) that after an update on the definition of "practising dentistry" under the Dentists Registration Ordinance (DRO) (Cap. 156) came into effect, it marked the first time a person was arrested on suspicion of practising dental bleaching or teeth whitening procedure, but not being a registered dentist.

"The DH had earlier received a complaint from a member of the public that a non-registered dentist was suspected to have carried out dental bleaching or teeth whitening for a person in an industrial building in Lai Chi Kok. The DH staff and the Police conducted a joint operation yesterday afternoon (January 13), during which a 29-year-old woman was arrested for allegedly practicing dentistry but not being a registered dentist, with exhibits seized at the scene by the Police," a spokesman for the DH said.

With effect from January 1 this year, the definition of "practising dentistry" under the DRO was updated to clearly specify the services that may only be provided by registered dentists, with a view to offering better protection for citizens' health. Schedule 2 to the DRO clearly specifies that only registered dentists may provide another person with the following services:

- (1) the carrying out of dental bleaching or teeth whitening procedure;
- (2) the prescription of clear aligner; and
- (3) the carrying out of teeth veneering procedure.

"Any person provides or attempts to provide the aforementioned services but not being a registered dentist will commit an offence. The offender will be liable on summary conviction to a fine at level 6 and to imprisonment for three years, or on conviction on indictment to imprisonment for five years," the spokesman said.

The DH spokesman strongly urged members of the public not to patronise non-registered dentists for dental bleaching or teeth whitening procedure for their own health. Citizens may check before choosing dental services the [List of Registered Dentists](#) published by the Dental Council of Hong Kong online to verify the qualifications of service providers. If in doubt, citizens should refrain from receiving such services to ensure safety.